

REMARKS/DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

The Office Action dated July 19, 2004 has been reviewed and carefully considered. Claim 14 has been canceled, without prejudice, to place this case in better form for appeal. Claims 1-13 and 16-20 are pending. Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as amended and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-9, 11, 12, 14 and 16-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,576,854 to Schmidt et al. ("Schmidt").

The appeal brief filed concurrent with this, second, amendment after final amendment adequately traverses all claim rejections. The first after final amendment likewise adequately traverses all claim rejections.

Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Schmidt, in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,986,815 to Bryars.

As stated for the above, previous ground of rejection, the appeal brief and prior reply adequately address all claim rejections.

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Schmidt in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,875,008 to Takahara et al. ("Takahara").

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Reference is now made to the appeal brief and the
prior reply.

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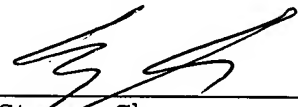
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Conclusion:

In light of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejections and objections of record, allow all the pending claims, and find the application to be in condition for allowance. If any points remain in issue that may best be resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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